



Heliograph



The Freedom Salute Campaign is one of the largest Army National Guard recognition endeavors in history, designed to publicly acknowledge Army Guard soldiers and those who supported them during the President's call to duty for Operations NOBLE EAGLE, ENDURING FREEDOM AND IRAQI FREEDOM.

The Freedom Salute Campaign began December 2003 and has thus far recognized over 100,000 deserving soldiers, family members, friends, employers, centers of influence and other very important persons for their contributions since the terrorists attacks on American soil, 11 September 2001. The leadership of the Army National Guard considers the campaign first and foremost a Recruiting and Retention Program. This is because how an organization treats its people is a direct reflection of the values the organization holds. Parents, prospects, other current members and families will watch closely how the Army National Guard treats its returning soldiers. Conducting these Freedom Salute Campaign programs is a wonderful opportunity to increase awareness in the community

of the good work being done by Guard soldiers. Not only does this soldier recognition directly impact recruiting, but it affects soldier retention as well. In a recent survey, soldiers returning from Operation IRAQI FREEDOM indicated that recognition for their service and sacrifice was one of the most important contributing factors in their decision whether or not they would continue to serve in the Guard.

The Arizona Army National Guard takes care of their own and insures each returning unit, their families, employers, and friends have an opportunity to experience the Freedom Salute program and share in the great accomplishments and service of the men and women from this state who risk their lives to protect our freedoms.

For more information about this program, contact the unit command of the returning unit for details about their upcoming Freedom Salute ceremony.

Note: This information is provided courtesy of www.virtualarmory.com and following the link to "Freedom Salute."



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THE MISSION OF ARMY PUBLIC AFFAIRS:

Public Affairs fulfills the Army's obligation to keep the American people and the Army informed, and helps to establish the conditions that lead to confidence in America's Army and its readiness to conduct operations in peacetime, conflict and war.

The 123rd MPAD supports the Army's Public Affairs Mission and extends it at a state level to meet the needs of the people of Arizona and the Arizona Army National Guardsmen.

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Any unsolicited submissions will be subject to revision due to space limitations, security, accuracy and propriety.

To submit stories, photographs, artwork or make suggestions on how we can better serve our readership, please e-mail us at 123mpad@gmail.com

For additional information call 602-267-2879 and leave a message.

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MWR...OPEN TO SERVE YOU!

Papago Park Military Reservation is proud to provide AZ-DEMA employees, National Guard Members and their families, an on-site Morale, Welfare & Recreation (MWR) Office. The office is conveniently located at 5636 E. McDowell Headquarters Bldg. 101. Call 602-267-2813 or email demamwr@azdema.gov

Free Sea World and Bush Garden Tickets

Here is to the heroes - Throughout 2005, members of the military and as many as three direct dependents may enter any one of Anheuser-Busch's SeaWorld, Busch Gardens or Sesame Place parks with a single-day complimentary admission. For more information log on to www.buschgardens.com or www.seaworld.com

Harkins Theater Tickets

Your Papago Park MWR has discounted Harkins & Loews movie tickets available for only \$6.00. These tickets are good at any Harkins at any time except Special Engagements after 6pm. A percentage of the ticket costs helps to fund your MWR program.

Sponsorship Opportunities

Would your company like to offer discounts to soldiers and their families? Promote your business while making a difference in the lives of soldiers and their families. Contact MWR at the number above for more information.



A Message from Brigadier General Richard G. Maxon

I just wanted to take a minute to let you know how we ended the fiscal year. Our strength target goal for FY 05 was 4550 (up 150 over last year). We finished the year at 4555. This makes us one of just a few states that made their end strength goal. We are also one of a much smaller number of states that made our end strength goal with a growth target for the year. The keys to our success included the outstanding job our recruiting force did in attracting new soldiers into our ranks. The other factor that seems to have had a major impact on success is the introduction of full-time retention NCOs in our units. In the short time they have been on board they have really made their presence felt. We will not put our feet up and rest on our success. We are proposing a strength target of 4700 for next year. My challenge to the organization is to break through that number and push toward 5000 which is our goal for the end of FY07.

Fund execution is always an issue. How we execute our funding program is an indication of how efficiently we are operating our organization. We finished First in the nation in the execution of our pay and allowance budget. We finished 8th in the nation in the execution of our Operations and Maintenance budget. These are excellent results. Major Law and his crew over in the Comptroller office are to be commended for their fine efforts.

Every year we submit a self-evaluation of our organization to the National Guard Army Communities of Excellence competition. This evaluation addresses many specific areas outlined in the Army Process Improvement Criteria (APIC) program. Each application is submitted for review by volunteers from across the country who undergo extensive training in the evaluation of these applications. The award categories are Gold, Silver and Bronze, each having a first through third ranking. There is also an Honorable Mention category. For the past several years we have received recognition in the Honorable Mention category. We were recently notified that for FY 05 we received third place in the Gold category. This translates to third in the nation. The states that beat us out were Minnesota and Ohio. This review confirms what I have always believed. We have been operating at this level for some time and we have now learned how to tell our story through the application process. This achievement demonstrates the tremendous effort by everyone in our organization. Thanks for all the great work that is going on out there.

Camp Navajo and the Western Army Aviation Training Site (WAATS) also submit applications in the Special Category competition. They have received recognition each year for the last several years. We anticipate this will occur again this year.

One area where we lost a little ground is the Order of Readiness list. We fell from third to ninth. While we have an issue with some of the data and we are looking to correct it, we are still meeting our goal of remaining in the top 10. The issue that appears to be dragging us down is duty MOS qualification. This is not surprising to us. By converting an Artillery Battalion to an Infantry Battalion, we knowingly created instant MOSQ mismatches for a large portion of our organization. This will be a short term issue and I expect us to rise again in the ORL standings as we start getting our new infantry soldiers back from school.

To date, the Arizona National Guard has deployed nearly 3000 soldiers in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom, Enduring Freedom and Noble Eagle. Over three hundred have recently deployed in support of the hurricane relief effort. These soldiers have served selflessly and with great honor. This service has been recognized by one meritorious unit commendation with many more pending. Individuals have been recognized by the award of 68 bronze stars and 43 purple hearts. Sadly, we lost two fine soldiers serving with the 860th MP Company. SGT Allen and CPL Robinson will be sorely missed. They both clearly represented the best of the best found throughout our organization.

Please share this information with your fellow soldiers. They need to know about the great things that are going on in our organization. After all, they are the ones making it happen.

Thanks for your service and hard work. Because of your efforts we are well on our way to becoming the world class organization our state and nation counts on for so many things.

Sincerely,

Richard G. Maxon
Brigadier General, AZARNG
Assistant Adjutant General, Army
maxonr@az.ngb.army.mil



In Remembrance of Arizona's Best

Sergeant Howard Allen and Corporal Jeremiah Robinson



Sergeant Howard Allen

SGT Howard Paul Allen, 31, of Mesa, AZ was killed in action on September 26, 2005 in Baghdad, Iraq while serving his country with the U.S. Army, 860th Military Police Co., a unit of the Arizona Army National Guard

"SGT Allen was a fine soldier, a wonderful husband, father, son, and friend to many" said Maj. Gen. David P. Rataczak Adjutant General of the Arizona National Guard. "This is a tragic loss to our Arizona National Guard family."

Allen graduated from high school in 1993 and was a member of both a school program for marketing studies and an anti-drunk driving organization.

"He'll never see his son grow up" his wife wrote. "He'll never be there to walk Caitlyn down the aisle when she gets married. He'll never be here to teach Edwin how to drive," his wife wrote. "He'll never be here for me to grow old with. He was my life. He was my love. He was my heart and soul. Never did I think that at the age of 31 I'd be a widow."

Allen is survived by his wife, Patience (Married, November 2004), son Devlin, stepchildren: Caitlyn and Edwin Stevens, Father and Step-mother: Herb and Irene Allen, sister: Diane (Dale) Alsobrook, Stepbrothers: Robert, Brian, and Steven Cross, one niece, two nephews and friend Robert Stevens. He is predeceased by his mother, Barbara Allen.



Photo by SSG Seth Israel

Major General David P. Rataczak, The Adjutant General of the Arizona National Guard presents Mrs. Allen and her children with the Bronze Star and Purple Heart.

Corporal Jeremiah Robinson

Jeremiah Wayne Robinson Oct. 22, 1984 - Oct. 6, 2005
CPL Robinson joined the Arizona Army National Guard to serve and defend the country he loved, and gave his life in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom on October 6, 2005. A 2003 graduate of Skyline High School, CPL Robinson was attached to the Phoenix-based 860th Military Police Company, a close-knit unit of Arizonans who termed themselves "brothers in arms." Known to his myriad of family, friends, and military companions as a patriot who stood tall, Jeremiah never met anyone he did not like, and everyone who knew him, loved him. He daily told his family members "I love you." Jeremiah loved little children, and always found the time for a talk or a wrestling match with any youngster willing to take him on. CPL Robinson knew the dangers he would face when he volunteered to serve, but he joined the fight to preserve the freedom Americans enjoy, and to extend that freedom to others. His fervent desire was that the country would support the troops, standing firm behind each soldier. Companions of the 860th described CPL Robinson as a soldier who willingly served in any position needed, excelling in all. He was an outstanding marksman and

qualified expert on every weapons system he fired. Military awards conferred upon CPL Robinson include the Combat Action Badge, Bronze Star Medal, Purple Heart, Army Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Iraq Campaign Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Armed Forces Service Medal w/"M" Device, and Army Service Ribbon.



Photo by SSG Ernie Paquette

Major General David P. Rataczak, The Adjutant General of the Arizona National Guard salutes the flag he presents to the Robinson family.

Obituary Information courtesy of the Arizona Republic and the East Valley Tribune.



Arizona Soldiers Help Out in Wake of Katrina

91st Civil Support Team Goes to the Rescue

Hurricane Katrina devastated large parts of the Gulf Coast region including New Orleans. In the aftermath, aid poured in from around the country to help people get back on their feet. But before people could safely return, the areas had to be secured from potentially hazardous material lying about as a result of the storm.



Aerial photo surveying some of the damage caused by hurricane Katrina.

The Arizona Army National Guard, 91st Civil Support Team, was deployed to manage the problems of such hazard material that Hurricane Katrina left in its wake. The 91st CST specializes in managing and understanding of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). Hurricane Katrina may not have been a WMD, but it created destruction on a massive scale. The unique skills of 91st CST had prepared soldiers to confront the devastation this category five hurricane brought to the city of New Orleans.

"A weapon of mass destruction is a hazardous material," said Lt. Col. Michael Reichling, 91st CST Commander. "This may not have been a WMD, but the process is the same and we helped the local authorities in assessing the situation."

The 91st CST mobilized on the 10th of September, and was in Louisiana by the 12th. The entire 22 member team deployed and immediately assessed their assigned area for possible hazards.

The 91st CST set up operations on the 5th floor of a local hospital in the town of Kennebec. According to Lt. Col. Reichling, they received a list of over 1000 individual sites that needed to be inspected to insure they were safe for the civilian populace to re-enter. It was during this time the 91st CST experienced many first.

The heart of the 91st CST operations contain two survey teams responsible for investigating possible hazards, collecting samples, and logging and packaging hazards for disposal. Sgt. 1st First Class John Steele and Sgt. 1st First Class David Janikowski, 91st CST survey team members, spent weeks investigating hazard material and then spent additional time helping Louisiana's 62nd CST after the 91st returned to Phoenix.

"It took a few days for the devastation to sink in," said Steele. "You would drive down the street and see where the water level was eight feet high on the building. Then five miles away, I could see the water still three feet deep and cars up on the roof tops."

"We investigated about 10 to 15 sites a day," added Janikowski. "There were streets you still couldn't drive down a month after the storm."



Sgt. 1st Class Jason Janikowski suiting up and preparing to act as back-up for the Charity Hospital Mission.

STORY CONTINUED ON PAGE 10



The Return of the HELIOGRAPH

The 123rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment is Home

The 123rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment (123MPAD) returns from deployment under the command of Major Gary Sheppard and Executive Officer Major Kevin O'Neil. The 123MPAD was assigned to the United States Central Command Public Affairs Office at MacDill Air Force Base, Tampa, Florida and Forward Headquarters - Qatar.

Central Command is known as a Joint Force "Combatant" Command for theater of operations in South East Asia. This theater encompasses over 21 countries, including both Afghanistan and Iraq. 123MPAD soldiers performed their mission for the entire theater of operations.

A MPAD's primary mission is to promote and perform the Army's Public Affairs mission in a mobilized environment. In a joint operations environment, MPAD duties and responsibilities are to be performed for all servicemembers. No matter what uniform one wears, the primary goal remained the same - to tell the servicemember's story to local, national, and international press organizations.

Serving in traditional and non-traditional roles the 123MPAD was challenged to create a new and innovative way to facilitate interviews for servicemembers in Iraq and Afghanistan. Commanders and individual soldiers would then have direct access to the press so they could tell their unique experience and perspective.

123MPAD members worked directly with all International and American networks, even the most rural of outlets in America had access to our operations. It was not unheard of to have the likes of Wolf Blitzer (CNN), Gordon Liddy (National Syndicated Radio), Barbra Starr (CNN), and Geraldo Rivera (FOX), and other notables calling in or visiting us directly to workout the details of a particular interview.

123MPAD members conducted interviews using the latest satellite and video technology. However, numerous interviews were accomplished simply using a phone. Conference calling a servicemember from the front lines with members of the press was often a preferred method to conduct interviews.

MPAD members would then transmit a photograph and or video of the servicemember to the media outlet and within hours he or she would be in the newspapers, on the radio or television explaining the mission and accomplishments of their fellow warriors.

The 123MPAD's major contributions include the facilitation of over 1,000 interviews with local, regional, national, and international media outlets reaching an estimated audience in the millions.



While deployed, Soldiers of the 411th Civil Affairs Brigade conduct a live interview with a national radio talk show to a listening audience back in the United States

123MPAD members were also deployed to state of the art satellite and video editing facilities. The 123MPAD was recognized for their Award winning design of the U.S. Central Command website and implementation of an electronic newsletter for U.S. Central Command subscribers. Both tools are still being used today.

With the return of the MPAD, the soldiers of the Arizona Army National Guard will also have the return of the Heliograph. The 123MPAD would like to reach out to our readership and encourage you to submit stories, photos, and information about you and your unit. Family members are welcome to contribute. Please submit your query to 123MPAD@gmail.com



(bottom left) The home page banner of the United States Central Command as re-designed by the 123rd MPAD. Stay current on major events and accomplishments visit www.centcom.mil and sign up for an informative newsletter explaining the latest events of the U.S. Central Command



Arizona's Deployed Units Making Their Mark

Deployments are a way of life for American soldiers, and Arizona Army National Guard members, this is no exception. Current units in the Middle East include the HQ 2-180th Field Artillery, FWD (RAOC Mission), 860th MP Co, and the 159th Finance Det.

The 2-180 FA is attached to Multi-National Force- North West (MNF-NW) and is responsible for Base Command functions for the Forward Operation Base Marez and provides logistical support in other areas of Iraq.

The 2-180 is also responsible for coordinating force protection improvement projects to enhance base security and position improvement as well as ensuring that base entry procedures are employed.

SSG Steve Contreras, 2-180FA, recently re-enlisted while deployed in Iraq. Contreras said his decision to re-enlist was due in part to the units' close bond and camaraderie. "My job is very rewarding and that everyday is something new, it is the best thing of this deployment," said Contreras.

The 860 MP Co. is currently stationed in Mosul, Iraq and is accomplishing two missions. First, is training the Iraqi police to take over enforcement of the country. Second, is supplying route security and keeping the roads clear for coalition forces.

"The job is rewarding when you are able to see the Iraqi police conducting their missions" said MSG Quinton Oster said, The training is the easy part; you can change tactics but changing their minds and the way they think is the hard part. Being the best role models we can and doing police work with them on the streets is where we get the best bang for our buck."



860th MP Co. out on patrol some where in Iraq.



860th MP Co. conducts a search in Mosul.

"The Iraqi Army originally held a one mile area of Baghdad, but now they have increased their presence to owning three quarters of the city," Oster said.

The 159th Finance Det. is deployed at Camp Victory in Kuwait. The detachment mission is to assist soldiers with cash and pay problems and to ensure entitlements, as servicemembers enter into theater.

SGT Gabrielle Vasquez stated that the experience has made her appreciate what she has at home. Vasquez left behind her husband Francisco and her 2 year old daughter Alexandra when she was deployed. "I enjoy the opportunity to make a difference but being away from my family is the hardest thing about this whole deployment," said Vasquez.

These three units are among the many units the Arizona National Guard have deployed around the globe. Other units currently deployed are the 185th Aviation, 2-180th FA Delta Battery, and Co C 1/189th Avn Bn.

Story by Pfc. Monette Wesolek.



2005 Outstanding Soldier Competition

Recognizing Arizona's Top Soldiers

After completing a two day competition, the winners of the annual Outstanding Soldier competition, NonCommissioned Officer of the Year, and First Sergeant of the Year were announced at an awards banquet held at the Phoenix Sheraton Airport Hotel on Saturday evening, October 29, 2005.

Five Soldiers (E4 and below) and six NCOs (E-5 thru E7) represented their commands; competing for the top honor of being named the Arizona Army National Guard Soldier or NCO of the Year. After an orientation on Thursday evening at the 215th Regional Training Center, the competition phase started on Friday morning, October 28th, with an Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT) that included sit ups, push ups, and a 2 mile run. After returning to Papago Park Military Reservation and changing into field uniforms and equipment, the rest of the day consisted of testing on individual warrior tasks to include a timed land navigation course, testing on 5 different common soldier tasks, and a written exam of 50 questions that covered a variety of general soldier information.

Saturday morning started early at the rifle range where they tested their marksmanship skills. The final stage of this competition was an oral board in front of a panel of Command Sergeants Major. The two candidates for First Sergeant of the Year also had an oral interview board to determine the winner in that category.

The Soldiers, NCOs and 1SGs who competed were nominated by their Major Commands as their "most outstanding" soldiers for fiscal year 2005. They represent the best and brightest of the Arizona Army National Guard. The competition this year was extremely close in each category, but after all the points were tallied, the following winners were announced:

Soldier of the Year

SGT Duane F Noffz, 1404th Transportation Company, Camp Navajo Command.

NCO of the Year

SFC John P. Salazar, Detachment 1, 1404th Transportation Company, Camp Navajo Command

First Sergeant of the Year

1SG Patrick Powers, Company D, 1/285th Aviation Battalion, 385th Attack Helicopter Regiment

The other outstanding competitors were:

Soldier of the Year: Runner-up: SPC Scott J. Todd (258th Engineer Company) representing the 98th Troop Command. Also competing were SPC Christopher Hagenian representing the 153d Field Artillery Brigade, SPC Mark Mathis from the 385th Attack Helicopter Regiment, and SGT (SPC-recently promoted) Saun F. Lehar, Western Army Aviation Training Site.

NCO of the Year: Runner-up: SGT Jose G. Rios (Company G 258th Aviation) representing the 385th Attack Helicopter Regiment. Also competing were SSG Anthony C. Brewer from the 153rd Field Artillery Brigade, SGT Joseph Ramirez from the 98th Troop Command, SFC Bryan Wheeler from the WAATS, and SGT Donald States, from the Joint Forces Headquarters.

1SG of the Year: Runner-up: 1SG Armando Rascon (Co B 1-158th Inf) representing the 153rd Field Artillery Brigade.

During the Outstanding Soldier Awards Banquet, each competitor was presented with the State Command Sergeants Major Award and coin from State Command Sergeant Major Karen Craig.

Individual trophies, an Army Achievement Medal, and other recognition items were presented to each of the winners by Major General David P. Rataczak, The Adjutant General.

The NCO and Soldier of the Year winners will go on to represent the Arizona Army National Guard at the Fifth Army Southwest Regional NCO and Soldier competition to be held in Sante Fe, New Mexico in April 2006.

Congratulations to all these outstanding SOLDIERS!



Left, SGT Duane Noffz, Soldier of the Year, Right, SGT Noffz receiving his trophy from Major General David Rataczak.



Photos by SSG Ernie Paquette.



Am I a Veteran?

Understanding your status as a National Guardsman

A simple question, right? In an effort to ensure all of the soldiers and airmen of the Arizona National Guard take full advantage of the benefits they are entitled to as a veteran, I wanted to define a *veteran*. I searched for a definition – on the internet, in pamphlets, in the dictionary...and what I found was that defining a veteran is not a simple task.

What I found was that there are over 550,000 veterans (that are known) in Arizona alone! What I found was that one definition of a veteran was 4 pages long. What I found was that as a veteran one might be eligible for VA health care which encompasses many services (readjustment counseling, services and aids for blind veterans, substance abuse treatment, outpatient dental treatment, nursing-home care – to name a few); disability compensation; education and training (Montgomery GI Bill, VEAP, etc.); home loan guarantees; life insurance; burial benefits; survivor benefits; benefits for women and homeless veterans; small and disadvantaged businesses; workplace benefits; naturalization preference; license and tax fee exemptions; special license plates...you get the idea! What I found is that about 10% of all veterans are in receipt of compensation and pension. What I found was that many millions of dollars allocated for veterans go unused each year. What I know is that many of us are veterans and are not taking advantage of those benefits for which we may be eligible.

The Arizona Department of Veterans Services and the Department of Veterans Affairs recognize that over the past four years many new veterans have been created and need to be educated on their benefits. Eligibility depends on individual circumstances – not just a DD Form 214. They need your help!

Find out if you are eligible. You don't have to be old to be a veteran! You don't have to have served in a war to be a veteran! For the home loan guarantee services you only need to have completed a total of six creditable years in the Selected Reserves (yes, that includes the National Guard).

Here's how to get more information. Visit a Veterans' Benefits Counselor at your AZ ARNG Soldier Support Center on Mondays and Fridays from 0730 to 1500 or Wednesdays from 1000 – 1800 or call 1-800-827-1000. You can find additional information at www.va.gov or www.advs.gov.

From me to you – take care of yourself and your family. Take a few minutes of your time to find out the benefits you are eligible for now! If you have any questions, please give me a call at 602-267-2909. Thanks to you and your family for your continued service and support.

Information provided by CW3 Jody A. Reidenhour, AZ ARNG Soldier Support Center



Left, First Sergeant of the Year: 1SG Patrick Powers, Company D, 1/285th Aviation Battalion, 385th Attack Helicopter Regiment; Center, SFC Salazar and SGT Noffz hold their trophies; Right, NCO of the Year: SFC John P. Salazar, Detachment 1, 1404th Transportation Company, Camp Navajo Command.



Arizona Soldiers Help Out in Wake of Katrina Continued

91st Civil Support Team Goes to the Rescue

During their month long deployment, the 91st CST investigated over 70 sites and countless door to door private property inspections.

To keep the survey teams functioning, the 91st employs a staff of medical, communications, and logistic personnel. Sgt. 1st Class Stephen Campbell, accompanied the survey teams and maintained the equipment that is used to analyze the chemicals they recovered.

SFC Campbell arrived ahead of the 91st CST to coordinate the arrival. "The devastation was an awakening," said Campbell. "New Orleans looked like it was knocked back a century... but our survey teams did a fantastic job. They knew their mission. We helped secure the area's health and welfare and I was proud to be with them."

The support team faced many challenges in Louisiana. The survey teams had to communicate over a 30 mile area with limited and sometime short range equipment.

"The state's communication system was reduced to using the one UHF system, so there was a lot of traffic and lot of chaos," said Sgt. 1st Class John Hite, 91st CST Communications NCOIC.

"You could access the UHF system from the internet, anyone could listen...so we started using the tactical satellite radios to secure communications" said Hite. "A Radio Shack, across the street from operations, became a resource for supplies."



Sgt. 1st Class Jason Dubbs, 2LT Benjamin Lucero, Sgt. 1st Class Ramon Reis, and CPT Scott Hier discuss operations at Charity Hospital.



Sgt. John Ralph discussing decontamination procedures with an Iowa CST member.

Finding diesel fuel was another common problem. "The military uses JP-8 which was too rich for our vehicles," said Sgt. 1st Class Ramon Reis, 91st CST, Unit Supply Sergeant.

Reis coordinated with Jefferson Parish officials for delivery of diesel fuel. Regular supply runs to New Orleans for the teams were needed. Additional supplies were even ordered over the internet.

"These guys burned through a lot of supplies, especially the lab," said Reis. "We were lucky. We normally operate for a 72 hour period. The people were really nice and helped us out and worked with us to get the supplies we needed."

When it was time for the 91st CST to return home, Steel and Janikowski stayed to help out for an additional two weeks. "We arrived when there was about twenty percent of the people in the area, but when we left, about eighty percent of the people had returned," said Janikowski. "It was good to see them bring life back in their communities."

Additional Arizona Guard units deployed to aid in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina are: 855MP Co., 22-20th TC, 2220 TC Co., 1404 TC Co., and C 111th Med Bn.

Story by Specialist Lorne Neff, Photographs courtesy of the 91st CST.



Supporting Arizona's Soldiers

How To Make A Difference and How to Help

***"To care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and orphan."
-President Abraham Lincoln.***

After Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) the words of President Lincoln provide a modern day association and have a new sense of meaning for many of us. We now have a new generation of brave soldier's that we support and care for.

Please take the time to remember our fellow soldiers. Those who returned safe, those who are still serving and those who did not return at all. There are many ways to show your support for these soldiers, here are several ways you can help:

- ✓ Call a local school and volunteer to speak to students. A soldier in an Army uniform is better than Spiderman or the latest Pokemon card.
- ✓ Volunteer at a VA hospital, like the Carl T Hayden Medical Center in Phoenix, 602-222-6419 or locate one near you at www1.va.gov
- ✓ Arrange to visit a nursing home in uniform. Next to children, no other generation admires soldiers more.
- ✓ Call your local recruiter to find out how you can support their office.
- ✓ Donate or have a fundraiser for Arizona Army National Guard Emergency Relief Fund. For more information call 602-267-2593.
- ✓ Send a magazine subscription to someone serving in OIF or OEF.
- ✓ Write a letter to your senator or congressman encouraging them to pass legislation supporting troops.
- ✓ Buy a gift for a deployed soldier's child this Holiday Season – The GUARDian Angel program is kicking off November 1, 2005. Call the State of Arizona Family Assistance Program for more information at 1-800-233-7758.
- ✓ Donate money to support scholarships for military children @ <http://www.militaryscholar.org>
- ✓ Donate money, labor, or material to help build a home for a veteran www.homesforourtroops.org to help build or remodel homes for soldiers who have returned home with serious disabilities and injuries and need handicapped accessibility.

Thank You for Your Support and Contributions!



Arizona Wins Third Place in Gold Category

2005 Army Communities of Excellence Competition

The Arizona Army National Guard is proud to announce it has been awarded third place in the Gold category in the 2005 Army Communities of Excellence (ACOE) competition. ACOE applications are ranked Gold, Silver or Bronze with each ranking having a first, second or third position. States not being awarded Gold, Silver or Bronze are recognized in the Honorable Mention category. This accomplishment is of great importance in that the ranking provides additional funding and national recognition for the way we perform as an organization.

The Arizona Army National Guard has been a volunteer participant in the ACOE program since 1994. The ACOE program utilizes the Army Performance Improvement Criteria (APIC) to assess organizations against an established management program. The APIC criteria is based on the Malcolm Baldrige Criteria for Performance Excellence used by thousands of U.S. organizations to stay abreast of ever-increasing competition and to improve performance.

During the month of August, states and installations submit an ACOE Application to NGB. The ACOE Application is restricted to 50 pages and is comprised of seven categories - Leadership; Strategic Planning; Customer Focus; Measurement, Analysis & Knowledge Sharing; Human Resource Focus; Process Management; and Organizational Results. The ACOE program is designed to increase performance and productivity by allowing states to focus on reviewing processes and business practices against the APIC criteria.

The National Guard Bureau, in a joint effort with the Army Reserve, conducts an ACOE Downselect in September. The Downselect is a process of evaluating and scoring the ACOE applications submitted by states and installations. Installations (Camp Navajo & WAATS) are placed in the Special Category and do not compete with state applications. Each application is scored against the APIC criteria by a team of trained examiners. The evaluation team provides each application with a feedback report identifying strengths and areas for improvement. NGB publishes the results of the Downselect and conducts an ACOE Awards Ceremony in the spring.